

Dedicated to no one.

Chapter 1

It began as a simple mistake. As always.

This tends to happen after each break up I go through- I **begin** coming out of my shell again. The romantic in me dies and a socially obnoxious person arrives **in place**.

After having been away from everyone for so long, I went to the local bar in Northern Virginia that my coworkers frequent every Sunday. It's a loud place where people **sing** karaoke. I **was in the middle of** a conversation with **one of them**, David, at a table near **the rest of** our colleagues. **I began** telling him that I wanted to drink whiskey before my flight tomorrow, to help me sleep through the ride. David leaned in close and projected his mouth right into my ear, "Danny, you've gotta sneak some airplane bottles with you through security!"

“Is that even legal?” I ask.

“I’m not too sure, but I haven’t had any issues doing it on the last 37 flights I’ve been on.”

“David?”

“Yeah?”

“Have you counted every flight you’ve been on?”

“Yeah.”

I reply “Okay, well, fuck it. That’s good enough for me!”

A glass shatters loudly and everyone turns to look at this tall white man as he yells at a girl. “THE FUCK IS WRONG WITH YOU?!”

She storms out of the bar and screams back at him from the entrance, “You’re such fucking MANWHORE!”

The man chases her out.

“Wonder what that’s about.” David says to me. “Shit, but we’ve all been there.”

“Yeah. “ I said.

“Chasing our girls down the streets, drunk arguments, and crappy apologies. Familiar ain’t it?”

I got too drunk and pissed off my coworkers with some things that I said **soon after that**. I don't know what I said, but David **had to** drive me home.

7am came **and** I was awakened by the annoying iPhone alarm clock. I hit the **off** button on the screen, **went** to the bathroom, threw up in the toilet, and took a short shower. I ordered my Uber to drop me off at the nearest greyhound bus station. With a not so bad hangover, I got my clothes in my backpack ready and got in the car when it arrived.

“Daniel Flocks?” The Uber driver **asked**.

“Yeah.” I replied.

“Bus station, right?”

“**Mhm.**”

He was a black man **in, what looked to be, his mid thirties**.

A few minutes of **blissful** silence went by, **but** I guess the **Uber** driver was eager to have a conversation.

“Where are you heading to?” he asked.

“LA.” I **sighed out**.

“LA? That's dope man!”

“Have you ever been to LA?”

“Nah, only Miami.”

“How's Miami?”

“It's amazing! The women out there are unreal!”

“I hear that.” (I don't have a lick of interest in my body to ever go to miami.)
The driver questioned if I saw the presidential debate on TV the night before.

“No, I've lost all hope for our government.”

“I hear ya bro. At this point we're better off having one of them A.I. computers as our president.”

I smiled after he said that.

Chapter 2

The driver dropped me off at the bus station. There were homeless men outside, not begging for money, but just looking for somewhere to lay. I went inside and saw the dirty floors and the people were dressed in their sweatpants.

It's mainly black people and some hispanics in the lobby. I went to the bathroom to pee. All the stools looked rusty and one of the toilets had shit all over it. Poop was leaking out of it touching the floor and it smelled like death! Top 10 most disgusting sights I have ever seen. I peed in a urinal that was angled, so that I could still see the door if anyone entered the restroom.

I am very cautious of anyone who enters the bathroom while I'm in there. I would be a bit anxious if I couldn't see a door in every room that I was in- I find even the nicest people suspicious. Anyway, I went to the lobby, put on my headphones that I stole from a restaurant a couple weeks ago and listened to some music I used to love when I was in middle school. I have this habit of turning up the music when I notice no one's near but, then I lower it if I notice anyone getting closer.

The bus came and we all entered. I sat next to this white man who looked to be about forty. The ride was a long one

due to traffic on the 95 highway. Once in Washington DC, I needed to take a train to the airport. The white man next to me on the bus noticed my frustration, as I kept refreshing the google maps app on my phone. I let out a sigh, my phone has no connection.

“Hey, you alright, buddy?” he asked. My first thought was that this guy needs to mind his own business, but in a polite manner I replied. “Yeah, just looking for the nearest liquor store around the train station so I can get some airplane bottles before my flight.”

“Oh alright. What airport are you going to?”

“BWI.”

“Shit, I could go for a cheap drink too.”

“That's what I'm saying! Do you wanna come with me, man?”

“Hell yeah.”

We got off, walked down a hill on E street. Walking together, both with our big backpacks bouncing around on our backs, we passed by plenty of business men and women.

They looked down at us, as if we were some low life, **low** class peasants. Oh, how shameful **of us** to walk down the same streets as them, high and mighty, with their nice clothes and **high** salaries! That's fine, though. I would rather be **perceived** as a loser than work in Washington DC.

We entered the liquor store that was run by an asian man **and** looked around the shop for airplane bottles, but we couldn't find them. I went up to the asian man and **asked**, "Do you have airplane bottles?"

"Not here, sir."

"Damn, this sucks.."

The white guy I made friends with came up with a small bottle of jack daniels and bought it. We left the store and stood near an alle**y**. He asked if I wanted a hit of the jack, I did. **After passing it back and forth, he broke the silence**, "Wait, when's your next train?" he asked.

"12:20"

“Dude. It's 12:12 right now. **The station is ten minutes away.** Motherfucker, go catch your train!”
With that, I ran.

Chapter 3

I ran up that hill breathing heavily, **continued to run through the doors of Union Station, and right up to the desk to show the worker my ticket.** She said **the train was about** to leave and pointed **in the direction of** where to go. *“Right out that door you'll see a train with a number 7 onto your left!”*

I ran like a fucking dork, as if I was trying to make it on time for the first day of school.

I sprinted to the first cart on train #7. **I** Jumped through the **train doors** and sat **in the first open seat.** Breathing heavily, wiping the sweat from my face, I thought about how dramatic that entire scene was.

A white woman sitting across from me stared with disgust in her eyes! She

probably doesn't like Mexicans I thought- but I **don't** care. Two minutes **pass and** the doors close. The Ticket agent walks around checking everyone's ticket and when he arrives at me he asks, "Ticket?"

I pull out my QR code from my phone as he scans & **then** says, "Ahh you're in the right train, but you're in the wrong cart, buddy. This is business class."

"Huh.."

I turned around and looked at the other seats, all the people had nice clothes and laptops. It made sense now. That white woman wasn't just a racist lady. She's a RICH racist lady! Anyhow, I was guided to a different cart and quickly found another empty seat.

We arrived at **the** BWI airport then I went through security. My flight was about to leave in an hour. I sat and scrolled on my phone. I thought about Taylor, and how **I'd like** to call her right now **to** tell her about this whole dumb journey I've had so far, but I can't. She

blocked my number a long time ago, so that's not gonna happen. People started lining up in their groups as they announced boarding. I looked in my bag, I looked and, I looked. "FUCK!" I yelled. I never did buy those airplane bottles.

Chapter 4

The plane ride was ass. I fucking hate airplanes. Being in those things causes me a lot of stress. No matter how many times people explain to me how airplanes work, how they fly, and how they land it will NEVER make sense to me. So many things in this world just don't make sense to me.

After landing and entering LAX, I looked around me and saw the hoards of people inside the airport. LA was a hell pit, but LAX feels like the seventh circle to me.

A random man was dancing in the middle of the lobby and all of a sudden threw up. I left, waited outside as my mom and older brother drove to pick me up. They were so excited to see me, I missed them. Being away from my family is sometimes good. Once I get bored of the mundane lifestyle in Virginia, it's good to come back and deal with my dysfunctional family's bullshit in Los Angeles. Anyone without a dysfunctional family isn't authentic to me, but luckily I think most of us are blessed with this unfortunate curse. We caught up with one another during the drive to my mom's house. My mom had to go to Mexico for the next three days, which is unfortunate, because I'm only in LA for four. We spent the day together, sitting in the kitchen and drinking coffee until 2am. Ya know, the classic thing Mexican mothers love to do.

I got drunk off some tequila and said something rude to her that seemed to

upset her during our conversation, but I don't really care.

The next day came and my brother and I went out for breakfast with our dad. My father was bitter about something **in terms of** his small business (he ran a pet shop in the city). My dad yelled at the waitress but I was too hungover to pay attention **as to** why. **After enduring what felt like the longest breakfast of my life, my brother and I went back to our mom's with a 12 pack of beer.**

“Are you doing alright?” My brother asks.

“Yeah, just tryna turn up after that one break up, ya know? Been drinking a lot.”

“Well that's why we flew ya out here foo! You're always in that swampy ass state Virginia. Plus, wasn't that relationship long distance or some shit?

“Kinda, I'm pretty stupid for getting involved in that.”

“Well, it looks like you've been holding yourself up pretty well. At least you're

not being all Emo writing corny ass poems.”

“Yeah, I know right! I could be a pussy just all in his feelings right now.”

“Damn straight. We THUG shit out over here.”

“I wish I was a thug.”

“You tryna shave your head?”

“Not today.”

My brother adds. “OH Shit, by the way. Chris wants to hang with you. He just hit me up like an hour ago”

“Aight. Let's pull up to his place.”

“Fosho, lemme shower real quick and we're out.”

“Alright. Bet.”

Chapter 5

We arrived at Chris's place, he came outside when he heard my brother's car pull up in his driveway and waved, smiling at us through his house door. Chris was a conspiracy theorist and sold weed illegally for money. We

got out and Chris let us in. He was super stoked about seeing me again, but also seemed to be high on something. Besides living with his mom, he seemed very happy. I think Chris had a codependency issue, just like many of us. For some people it's family, some it's porn, or others it's substances. I really loved depending on alcohol. As we were inside the living room my brother looked at his phone and said, "Ahh shit. Hold up, Dad needs me to go check something out at the pet shop," and so he left without me. Chris and I stayed at his place and went into his room. Unlike his living room, which was very clean, his personal room had black out curtains and was very messy. He had beer cans on his gaming desk, an unmade bed, and a plastic bag laying on the floor with a bunch of tissues inside it (most likely all the ones he had cummed on whenever he masturbated). I thought to myself. "Damn motherfucker you live like this?"

He had a mini fridge and gave me a beer. We went back to the living room. I asked him, "How ya been doing man?"

"I've been chilling, dawg, I've been REALLY into podcasts lately." He replied as he got himself a beer.

"That's cool."

"yeah but people say it's controversial!"

"What's controversial about it?"

"Well, it has to do with the earth being flat."

"Oh."

"By the way," he said. "The homegirl is coming over."

"Who?"

"Alma.."

"Oh."

Alma was funny, argumentative, spoke like a dude, had big brown eyes, and overall, was always a very relaxed person. She was also my ex. I don't really want to get into how we met but we ended on good terms a long time ago, even though I never told her my true feelings. I would say Chris and Alma had

a better relationship with each other than I did when I was with her.

Anyhow, twenty minutes went by and Alma came over and let herself in the door. She said “Hiii!!”

“Hey wassup.” We both said to her. She came up to me and gave me a light hug.

“How ya been?” She asked as she sat herself down.

“Just getting over a break up, ya know”

“Awww did ya get heartbroken again?”

“You wouldn't know what that's like, huh?”

“Uhh and thank God I don't!”

“Yeah, thanking God, huh. Do you even pray alma?”

“Sometimes, when I need my car to work.”

“Does it work right now?”

“Nah it wont start. I got super high the other day and I think I killed the battery leaving the light on the entire night.”

“Looks like you forgot to pray.”

“mmm.”

“you should get it checked out though.”

“Yeah, I’ll make an appointment with God soon.”

She pulled out a container and started grinding up weed to smoke.

“You wanna smoke a blunt with me?”

“Nah, ya know I don’t smoke.”

“Bruh, you still don’t smoke?”

“Nah, I’ve tried smoking weed hundreds of times but I just can’t get into it.”

“Well, I heard it helps with the heartbreaks!” she leans back rolling her blunt on the couch. “It’s the right kind of love.” she adds, as she squints at me.

Chris hits his beer and yells. “Y’all don’t know shit! Love is not real!”

Alma lights up her blunt, hits it, coughs, and says to him, “So you don’t believe in love?”

“I believe in TRUE LOVE.”

“Have you ever seen TRUE LOVE?”

“Yeah, Sometimes in old couples when they’re cussing each other out in public.”

“Right... Do you think that you could be capable of TRUE LOVE?”

“No.”

“Why?”

“TRUE LOVE takes commitment, it takes time, patience, attention, most importantly vulnerability, and to be honest, that sounds like A LOT of work! I think I would rather swipe on tinder, beat my meat, and fall asleep.”

I stood up and said.

“let’s get the FUCK out of here YO! I wanna go to Santa Monica & chill somewhere.”

“Aight” Alma said while putting out her blunt in the astray
And so we left.

Chapter 6

We left his house and got in his Lexus, Alma sat up front with him. Surprisingly, for how dirty & messy his room is, the inside of his car was pretty clean. I sat in the back and laid down while he drove. I dozed off, and woke up a few minutes later because of them arguing. Chris was making an argument about the earth being flat.

Alma yelled. “You sound really fucking stupid saying this shit!”

“Then why the fuck do they call it a tectonic plate and not a tectonic marble? plates are flat!” He says. “THE EARTH IS FLAT!”

I yell from the backseat, “Chris, What the FUCK are you talking about, bruh!”

“Sorry, dawg, I’m acting weird! I forgot to take my allergy medicine today!”

“Oh, is that what you call it?”

Chris looks at his phone while driving and says, “Hold up, bruh, I gotta go make a play.”

“Who are you delivering to?” Alma asked.

“The homie, Turtle”

I sat up “Oh shit I know that fool Turtle!”

“Yeah he said he wanted to see you foo,” Chris muttered with a cigarette in his mouth.

I dozed off. There was so much traffic on the freeway that day, but twenty minutes went by and I woke up hearing Alma tell Chris a story.

“So there we are, upstairs in this club. It's me and my three friends, ya know, the girls i'm always with. A couple of bad bitches out and about! This man kept flirting with me. I wasn't interested in him, but I told the guy, I'll give him a chance if he buys me and the girlies some drinks. He finally gave in & bought us our drinks. We took them and walked away but he began to follow us around yelling that I owed him and all this crap.”

“Well, In a way you do.”

“Yeah yeah, So he starts going up to my friends cursing at them. Luckily it was Bucket Night that night.”

“What's Bucket Night?”

“Basically they give you this small plastic bucket with ice that has a couple shooters inside of it.”

“Ahh airplane bottles..” I say to myself while listening.

“Well, there was a bucket on a table nearby and the ice had melted, so it was just a bucket of water sitting there, and he was still harassing my friends.”

“So did you throw the water on him?”

“Nah. I dumped it over his head from behind and pushed the bucket down onto his head.”

“Did he take it off & fight y’all?”

“Well that’s the thing- I guess, I didn’t realize he had a small head so the bucket ended up getting stuck on him. He couldn’t see a damn thing. He got confused, took one step, and fell down.”

“No way that happened!”

“No, no, I’m telling you the truth! It was straight out of a *Looney Toons* episode. We ran straight out the building after that!”

“Is that what bad bitches do on their nights out?”

I sat up, looked out the window from the car and saw a tall bridge over the riverbed. I thought about ending my life on one of those bridges about four years ago. We took an exit and arrived at Turtle’s apartment.

Chapter 7

Turtle comes out and picks up weed from Chris. Turtle asks. "What y'all bout to get up to?"

Chris says, "We're thinking about going to Santa Monica and posting up out there."

"No shit? Me and the homies about to go to a bar near the beach inna hour or two. Y'all should come through."

"Alright for sure."

Chris drove off and I sighed out loud.

"What's wrong dude?" Chris asks me.

"Nothing, bro, I just don't want to meet new people."

Alma says, "You're always like this, dude. Just get out of your comfort zone!"

As she hits a new blunt.

"How about you get out of your comfort zone and stop smoking weed all the time?"

"Yeah I'll stop smoking once you buy a car."

"How many blunts have you smoked through this car ride?!"

“about forty, I dunno.”

We got out at Santa Monica and walked around the pier. I went off by myself and stared out at the water. I was annoyed by everything: the water, the people, the warm seventy degree weather. I prefer the cold and the quiet. I prefer being with Taylor in a cold city like London, and remembering how it felt to be with someone whose company I didn't get annoyed by. I like all my friends, but I can only tolerate them for so long. Drinking helps prolong the tolerance, but overall I feel so annoyed by everything and the stupid conversations I have to endure.

“YO, Danny!” Chris says. “There's some dope ass art in this one shop nearby.”

“I don't really care”

“Aw come on, don't be like that man.”

“I just wanna chill somewhere and drink, bro.”

“We'll get to that, but we wanna go look around first.”

“Y'all can go without me.”

“What's wrong with you?”

“I'm just annoyed by everything.”

“Like what?”

“The people, the corny ass skaters, the hipsters, and the tourists. Everything!”

“You're so judgemental, man. So many people here are just happy.”

“Whatever, I don't care.” I walked off.

“I'll catch y'all later!”

I went to a dive bar alone.

An hour passed and Chris finally texted me the bar to meet everyone at- I got there a little late, and slightly buzzed.

Chapter 8

It was a dark bar with 80's music playing. The bouncer checked my I.D, looked at me and **inquired**,

“Daniel Flocks?”

“Yeah.”

“That's a white ass name for a **Mexican**.”

I went over to Chris, Turtle, and Alma. They were with a big group at a table, half were standing, half were sitting.

Turtle comes up to me and says to everyone, “YOO! This is the homie Danny! He's a good homie!” Everyone introduced themselves. **all of them were pretty sweet.** But, overall, I was uninterested. I saw Alma leave with some girl to **go to** the bathroom **for** a bump of coke. I sat at **the** table with a girl named Elizabeth Mail and some guy named Steven. Elizabeth seemed very smart because of the way she spoke. She was just one of those people, intelligent. Ya knew smart people, not when you saw them, but once you heard them. You'll know when you hear it. Steven on the other hand, not too sure. He had a slight Chicano accent and was focused on trying to show memes to Elizabeth on his phone. Then he said, “Hey, Danny.” “Yeah?”

“Do you think the earth is flat?”

I stood up and went to the bar to get a beer. There were a bunch of people sitting **around the bar.** Luckily, one seat in between **people was free to sit in.** I sat **down** and I waited for one of the

bartenders to notice me. While waiting I listened to some people's conversations that were happening around me. To my left was a group of women. A blonde one said. "No, no, your dreams do have meanings!"

"I don't think they do." the other woman replied.

"Tell me." The Blonde lifts up her phone.

"You think it's a coincidence you never see your phone in your dreams?"

Another fucking girl talking about the meaning of dreams, as if they ever mattered. I gave up on believing in dreams a long time ago. I decided to eavesdrop on the two men talking on the right side of me. One says. "No offense, but it sounds like all the work you do at your job is stupid."

"All work is stupid." the other man replied.

The bartender came and I got a shot of tequila with a Miller Lite. Alma came up to me, "Hey, whatcha doing sitting here alone?"

“Just go be with them. I know how you like attention.”

“You're being really aggressive today.”

“Don't you have some coke to do?”

“Don't you have some bitch to be crying over?”

“Shut up.”

“Ya know what? Fine then. Be a bitch.”

“Don't say that to me! You know how I feel about that fucking word.”

“NAH! I'll say whatever I want!”

“You're pissing me off!”

“Aw, okay. I'm so sorry I hurt your sensitive feelings Danny!”

She walked away and a short bald man came up to me. “Hey, you're that motherfucker!”

“Huh?”

“You're the motherfucker who flirted with my girl yesterday and kept talking about her asshole!”

“WHAT?!”

“Stop playing like you don't know me, with your stupid long ass face!”

“I don't know who the fuck you are!”

He pulled my shirt, I stood up and I could tell he regretted his decision after seeing I was a foot taller than him. He looked to be about barely five feet tall. He wasn't built either. He pushes me and I slap him with my right hand then hit him with my left fist. He falls down to the ground as I tell him, "Get the fuck up, little boy!" People came in to help and pull us away from one another, as the bouncer drags him out, the short Man yells "IMMA FUCKING KILL YOU!"

Chris and his friends run up to me
"What the fuck was that about?"

"I dont know!" I said. "Goddamn!
Thanks for no help, all of you!"

"Chill out, how the fuck were we
supposed to know some shits happening
with you when you're here tryna be
alone?"

I sat down again and ordered two shots
of tequila and two beers.

I've had it today, I'm over it. These
stupid conversations and idiots all over

the city. I was over all of it! I'm going to drink this night away.

Chapter 9

I woke up on a random bench, the street lights were bright, but it was really dark out. My ears had a ringing sound in them. I slid off the bench, walked a bit, tried to check my phone, but it was dead. I looked up and saw the street lamps were moving. Waving. I took a few more steps and the streets started tilted from left to right like I was on a boat.

“WHAT THE FUCK IS GOING ON?!” I screamed.

I started running, tripped, and looked up to see every cloud moving in the sky. I moved on for a minute walking along the sidewalk. As I looked up again, the clouds were still moving, but this time centering towards me. I started running, but the clouds kept catching up to me. I sweated and sweated while I ran. I hit

my face on a wooden fence, fell down onto the ground and stayed there. I tried looking up but everything was still tilting from left to right. It was overwhelming.

“Wait what the fuck is going on with me?!” I said to myself.

Suddenly an epiphany hit me like a bullet. I know what is going on now, I’m experiencing a bad trip! I hadn’t consumed anything besides some beers and two tequila shots. A couple minutes went by and the stars aligned.

“I HAD BEEN LACED!”

That's what it was, I concluded. But, by who? I was going to solve this mystery one way or another even if it means I had to sit here until I shit myself. I thought maybe it was the people at the bar stools, but It couldn't have been them, **they were all too preoccupied with themselves.** I also thought about the short bald man from earlier who threatened to kill me, but there was no way in hell his short ass could have even

reached **my drinks**. Unless he had a ladder, maybe.

“OH MY GOD!”

I knew who it was. The Culprit: Chris.

“THAT MOTHER FUCKER I’LL KILL HIM!”

He was probably pissed off that I didn't want to hang out with his stupid ass friends. I was convinced of that for a few seconds but I realized that it wouldn't have made any sense. Since he only sells weed he couldn't have had me laced with marijuana, at least I don't think you can. So I guess it wasn't him...

“AHH NOW I KNOW WHO!!”

It was Alma! She does coke! She probably has other kinds of shit on her all the time. She must've drugged me! it was the only thing that made sense!

CASE CLOSED.

“THAT FUCKING BITCH!!”

Finally, I stood up from the ground and walked into the middle of the street, **attempted to check my phone again, got angry, and threw it on the ground.** I **tried staring** into the dark streets

looking at the neighborhood I was in, but it was too dark to focus. Then I heard a loud noise from a car nearby. I looked where the sound came from, turned my head and saw headlights in the corner of the street. It turns hard, burns rubber, and rushes straight towards me! It stops with a hard break, screeching sound with the driver door perfectly in front of me. It was Chris's Lexus. Then the door opens hard and hits my body. I tripped but was still standing, I saw who came out of the car. Speaking of the devil, that witch, it was Alma.

Chapter 10

“COCKSUCKER!” she yells. With a perfect punch she hits me in my throat. I fell straight down to my knees and was trying to get back up. But God damn, when did this bitch learn to take some boxing lessons? She yells at me, “WHAT YOU DID TONIGHT WAS REALLY

FUCKED. YOU FUCKED UP BIG TIME!" I got up wobbling and coughing. I spit as I yelled. "WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! YOU FUCKING DRUGGED ME!" She slapped me across the face. I almost fell over again.

"You stupid idiot no one drugged you! You blacked out again! You always say someone has drugged you because you can't handle your own shit."

"SHUT UP BITCH! I KNOW YOU DRUGGED ME!" I launched towards her but she was faster and moved slightly to the left. Tripping me. I fell over again, scraping the palms of my hands and a bit of my chin on the concrete. I began bleeding. With another blow she kicks me in the stomach.

"STUPID IDIOT!!"

"Why are you doing this to me?!" as i screamed this a little bit of puke came out.

"You dumbass, you don't remember?!"

"NO!"

"You went around the bar taking random people's drinks. Pissing

everyone off. Told Chris's friends that he has a porn addiction and that sometimes his precum went on the weed that he gives out to people. to make it worse, you then told everyone else that I have a bad diarrhea problem!”

“I don't remember!” I yelled. as she kicks me again.

“No fucking shit you dont! YOU'RE A DUMB LITTLE BOY!”

“Don't call me that! I am a man! I'm older than you PUTÁ, I am a real man worthy of respect!”

“OH REALLY?” she kicks me again but this time harder in the gut.

I screamed, rolled over and laid on my back on the pavement. She hovers over me, squatting. She whispers, “I don't care how old or tall you are. You're nothing but an insecure little man to me.” she pushes my head down fast to the ground and the back of my scalp hits the pavement.

I lift myself up to push her away. I land on my hands and knees and yell, “Screw

you fucking bitch! I don't know why you stuck around!”

“At this point I don't either motherfucker!”

I stood up trying to keep my balance. “I know why.. Its because you wanna fuck all my friends!”

“WHAT!” She screams.

“Yeah yeah! I know that's the reason!”

She pushes me against the car, kicks my nuts and grips my shirt. “Listen here dumbass, I don't like any of your friends. Matter of fact i dislike almost all of them. Chris may be the only exception and that's because he's my plug. But besides that I only tolerate the rest of them. All your homies are annoying, Insecure wannabes hiding behind their stupid tattoos and their slang words they love to use. They are nothing but only weak minded boys. You weren't always like them but it seems like somehow that virus they have has spread onto you now.”

I faltered and stared quietly into her eyes.

“You are weak danny. You are so fucking weak.” As she shoves me again.

I stood there silent. I never heard anyone speak to me like that before, not even by my father, and he would always let me have it.

I asked her quietly. “Did I really do all that shit?”

“Bruh. you think i’d make all that up?”

“Maybe.”

“Well no, I didn’t make it up and everyone wants to beat your ass.”

“really?”

“Uh yeah really! Chris was so pissed off his friends had to pull him away from you! I don't know where they took him but that's why I'm driving his stupid ass lexus.”

“How did you find me?”

“We’re 3 blocks away from the bar.”

“Oh.”

“I'd stay lowkey for the next couple of days if I were you. Who knows what they're gonna do.”

“Damn, I pissed everyone off that much?”

“What's the matter, are you feeling bad?”

“Yeah.”

“Bitch.”

“I shouldn't be around people.”

She let out a nasty spit.

“Maybe if you weren't so selfish being around people, it wouldn't have such negative consequences.”

“You think I'm selfish?” I ask.

“All you care about is yourself.”

I stayed quiet. pondering. Maybe she was right, I usually don't feel guilty about the things I have said in the past and in my mind I'm always the one who's correct, because everyone is so annoying but this time I know I took it too far. I didn't just say things, I did things. I fucked up. She was telling the truth. I can hear it in her voice. I stared down looking at my feet and said “Um, um”

“WHAT!” She yells.

“I-..I'm sorry.” I looked up to her eyes and her eyes were big, bright and shiny. Quietly she says to me, “are fucking

serious?" she slaps me across the face again. "Don't look at me with those puppy eyes and stutter your words. Say what you mean like a man. You're life isn't some fucking movie!"

"Yeah, I know. you're right."

As hurtful as her words were to me, a part of my mind appreciated the brutality of being brought back onto earth, yet it still cored me.

She moves me aside. And gets back into the car. I stared at her. She sat there staring at the road with her hands on the wheel for 15 seconds, took a deep breath, turned on the car and drove off. I went on walking off somewhere, ended up on a main street of a boulevard. Somehow there was a bus still in service at this time of night. It stopped right in front of me, I went in and I didn't pay for the fare. The bus driver saw how dirty and bloody my face was and didn't bother to confront me. There was only an old couple on the bus sitting together. They just stared at me. I saw their eyes meet mine only once while I seated myself but

I could still feel it, I could still see it.
They can see it. Their eyes stuck to me
like glue. They didn't look down on me,
they could just see right through me.
They can see through the skin, the hair
and this ugly long face of mine that I am
nothing but a multitude of a shitty
human being.

Chapter 11

I don't remember what happened next
but i was alive and it was morning.
I awoke on a bench in a parking lot with
hundreds of metro buses near LAX.
Here I am in the 7th circle once again. I
really needed to take a shit so I got up,
walked towards the airport, went inside
and got into the bathroom. It was one of
those hot burning shits. Whenever you
drank too much it had to come out one
way or another. This route isn't that bad,
in my opinion. I think it's better shitting
out all of your regrets you had the night
before rather than it coming out of your
mouth. But it still hurts like hell though.

I washed some of the dry blood off on my hands in the sink as I looked around for a water fountain, I found one and drank some water of it. I walked back outside hearing the loud planes taking off and staring into the buses in the lot. As I walked around the sidewalk near the airport doors. I was slightly upset. It was frustrating me how I had forgotten the buses and the route I needed to take to get back home. I wandered and this black girl who was dressed in pink, skinny and not attractive was on the phone. seemingly pissed off, sounded like she was having an argument with a family member, I would assume. She went up to me and asked me if I knew where the metro buses were and I did, so I took her there. She said thank you and she asked me where I was from. I told her that I was originally from LA but currently living in Virginia and that I came by to visit some family here but I had no idea how to get back home. Luckily she lived in Compton which was somewhat near where my mothers place

was. She told me to tag along with her and I did. We sat together. I asked her what her name was.

“Jazmin.” she said.

“Daniel.”

She nodded.

“Danny, may I ask what happened to you?”

“What do you think happened to me?”

“Looks like you got an ass beating.”

“Yeah, a bunch of dudes at a bar picked a fight with me last night.”

“Oh. you're a trouble maker are you?”

“Only on the weekdays.”

“I wonder if you deserved it”

“Oh I definitely did.”

The bus went on and we sat in silence for a couple minutes. she asked what I was doing in the airport so early, I told her I got lost. She opened a pack of gum then handed me a piece. After that I asked her, “Where did you fly out from?”

“I was visiting my girlfriend in miami.”

“How was that?”

“It was cool but it sure was intimidating. The women out there are unreal!”

“I heard about that.”

“Yeah, me and her are long distance at the moment.”

“Ah I know that's hard.”

“yeah, have you ever been in a long distance relationship?”

“Just got out of one.”

“Has it been easy on you?”

“Sure has.”

Probably by looking at me once she could tell it hasn't been an easy ride. Especially after last night. She brought a notebook and wrote “DANNY: LAX. BUS/MORNING.” with a date next to it.

“What are you writing?” I asked.

“A little note for later. I write a lot.”

“Are you an author?”

“Nah, self proclaimed poet.”

“Oh, poetry?”

“Mhm.”

“How often do you write 'em?”

“Almost daily.”

“God damn. Daily?”

“When you're blessed with a crappy life you tend to have a lot of material to write about.”

She handed me one of her poems for me to read. It was an easy read. Not too complicated at all, or confusing at all. It was just straight to the point. I wish more writers wrote like that. Just straight to the point, maybe then I could get into reading or writing.

“You should write a novel!” I told her.

“Nah, poetry is the only thing worth writing.”

Couple minutes went by. I stared at the scabs on my hands. She asked me if I was okay, I told her no. We stayed silent for a couple minutes.

“It’s gonna get better.” she said.

“It hasn’t.” I replied.

I looked out the window and saw the riverbed. It was one of those tall bridges again and I thought about ringing the bell, stopping the bus and just getting it over with. Without much thought but clearly this process was me thinking too much about it, once again. it wasn’t going to happen.

Not today.

She poked me. And as if she read my mind.

“You've thought about doing stupid recently haven't you?”

“ ... ”

“Look I don't know you but you seem alright.”

“I'm not.” I said. “I've got nothing.”

“I don't believe that.” she said.

“Everyone's got potential. Shit, I didn't think I did either until I started writing poems. It gives me a lot of motivation though especially for a 36 year old woman like me. But you got something too. Everyone does.”

“Yeah everyones got something. Mine just happens to always be covered in bullshit.”

“This whole earth is covered by bullshit, but there's beauty hidden inside of it. There is beauty growing out of the manure in the places you least expected. You just gotta look for it baby.”

I looked out the window.

I said. “Ya know even though it's summer and the sky's been bright lately.

This place has a gloomy filter over it. especially in the mornings, maybe it's the smog."

"Maybe it's how you've been seeing things."

And maybe she was right. She asked me what I was gonna do later today and I told her I'm going to stay home, Drink and never come out.

"You don't have friends to drink with?" she asked.

"Not anymore."

"I'm assuming they're all mad at you?"

"Yeah but it doesn't matter. I'm leaving back to Virginia in 3 days."

"At Least you won't have to worry about the friends over here once you're back out there."

She could sense my sadness. I felt truly alone. She tapped my shoulder and said, "Hey man, life is short. Whatever you did yesterday was yesterday. you can reinvent yourself as many times as you want. You don't have to hold onto whatever version that you think or

anyone else thinks you are. Let it go man.”

“I'm the worst at letting go.”

silence passed.

“Short and meaningless is life.” I told her. “I don't really find a point in changing anything or even trying. Ya know?”

“Life is short and meaningless.” she said.

“That should be your motivation to do more.” She looked at me. “Don't do anything but find more excuses to live a longer life. Ya got it fucker?”

I smiled after that.

I always loved when someone made something so wholesome a little crude or edgy by adding some curse word thrown here and there. She got it. She was cool. She was that bitch. But what she said to me actually spoke to me. Not just for that moment but for the years so forth. I held onto those words, like a rope to pull on.

She taps my shoulder again and points to me the streets we're heading to. She rips out one of her poems from the

notebook and hands it to me. I put it inside my pocket.

“Come on danny. Get up. You're about to miss it!”

We stood up, hit the stop button and the driver hit the break with a hard stop. I almost tripped but I gripped onto one of the handle straps and got some balance. I've had enough falling and eating shit these past 24 hours. I wasn't gonna let it happen again! The doors opened and I hopped outta there. Stood on the sidewalk, turned around and stared at her. As she was behind that window glass looking at me, she gave me a light smile. As the bus slowly moved back onto the streets, her and I locked eyes, then our eyes broke off. The bus moved back onto the road. I looked down at the cuts on my hands and felt the note that she gave me in my pocket. As the bus drove away, I realized I forgot to say.

Thank you Jazmin.

What a treat to read this and to be a part of the editing process! It's come so far and continuously improves with each edit you make, no matter how small or large. Remember, my notes are subjective and I would love to sit down and collaborate together, that way they'll be a bit more clear. Below I'm going to list some overall notes, ideas, questions, etc. I hope this helps!

- This short story is present tense, correct? Some of the verbs are written and sentences are formed in past tense (-ed on the ends and

just general syntactical structure).
I'll help as well, because I'm
having trouble with certain spots
too, but make sure that the tense is
the same throughout the entire
piece.

- Not all of your "I"s are capitalized. Choose if you want them in upper or lowercase.
- You use the word "said" before and after dialogue a lot, finding other words would be useful in describing the situation and speaker
 - Hissed, pleaded, begged, mouthed, roared, sniped, teased, chanted, and so on.
- Some sentences are (in my opinion) too choppy. I know that's your preferred style, but make sure they are full and complete sentences.
- Don't be afraid to use compound words! Instead of "it is" use "it's" to make for a more natural and casual read.

- When transitioning you use the word “then” a lot, try and find different director words as to not sound repetitive
 - You also use the word “and” repeatedly, find other words for transitions.